



WORKSHOP: HOW TO MAKE YOUR NEWSLETTER BUY YOUR BOOK

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INTRODUCTION

We're focusing on the second half of this crash course from Nick Stephenson (<https://www.yourfirst10kreaders.com/seven-days-to-1k-part-4-gdfr/>) on author newsletters. Annoyingly, you will have to scroll, it is not searchable, but get down the "What to do with your email list" header.

(The first half is good info, but basic for most everyone here—e.g. have a newsletter, and reader magnets will help you. If you don't have a newsletter yet, I definitely recommend reading the first half too, it's just not what we're talking about here.)

If you've been in other craft discussion groups with me, you know I'm a big proponent of taking what works for you and discarding the rest 🤪. So don't feel like you have to treat all this as gospel! I don't even use every part haha, and I'll talk about why.

BUT, the approach I learned from this piece is what got me to a full *quarter* of my list (then 800 people) to *preorder* my next book—which was an unrelated book to my previous work, in a new subgenre, and novella length to boot, after I had not published anything in a year or been regularly emailing.

I have used a similar approach in my future launches, and while they haven't all been equally 🤪, when I send out an email, they reliably convert. I get opens, I get clicks, and I get buys. So I'm super excited to get into this!

Feel free to talk in here as you read, but I'm officially starting things off on Monday, and the first thing we're going to talk about is the 4 barriers, and what we can do to address them.

I don't want to keep this too prescriptive because we'll see how discussion goes, but part 2 is going to be talking about how to actually structure a launch campaign on a macro level: how many emails you want to send, and what each of them is going to accomplish.

Then if people want to go more in detail like okay yes all good in theory but what does that actually look like Casey, we can dial in. 😊



PART 1: BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

What we are starting with here is this post: <https://www.yourfirst10kreaders.com/seven-days-to-1k-part-4-gdfr/#:~:text=WHAT%20TO%20DO%20WITH%20YOUR%20EMAIL%20LIST>

And I am going to start talking about this today because you all will mostly wake up earlier than me tomorrow 😊, but it's time to get started on how to get your newsletter subscribers to actually buy things!

Beginning with: REMOVING BARRIERS

The first big thing Nick talks about is the principle of AIDA: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action.

If you can get a reader's attention, get them interested, stoke desire, and drive action... you've got the recipe for record-breaking sales.

Here's his chart as an example of how he breaks that down:

Email	AIDA	Overview
Email 1	Attention	"I'm launching a new book on [DATE] - here's what's going to happen"
Email 2	Attention / Interest	"Cover reveal, book blurb, reviews of your other books"
Email 3	Interest / Desire	"Sample chapter, launch bonus reveal"
Email 4	Desire / Action	"The book is live! Here's what you'll get. Buy here and get your bonuses"
Email 5	Desire / Action	"Share early reviews, repeat bonus offer and deadline"
Email 6	Action	"Last chance for bonuses"
Email 7	Attention / Action	"I'd love to know why you didn't check it out - what can I do to help?"
Email 8 (optional)	Attention / Action	"Survey, alternate offer"

To be honest, I found categorizing everything with these goals a little too nebulous to be easily actionable for me? 🤔 (I warned you I take what works for me and discard the rest lol)

So if this framework DOES click in your brain, I'd love to hear your thoughts!!

(All our brains are different, so if you love this part and not the part that worked for me, GO NUTS. And please report back so other people can learn too. <3)

But what DID really work for me was looking at the four barriers for why people don't buy:

1. **Ambivalence:** "Why should I be interested in this?"
2. **Skepticism:** "Why should I buy from YOU?"



3. **Concern:** “Sounds good, but it’s not right for ME.”

4. **Procrastination:** “Sounds great! I’ll take a look later.” (Eg – they never will).

And THIS makes sense to me. I think of it this way: my launch sequence is designed to help readers who will love my books actually read them. If I'm removing barriers that prevent them from buying, I am HELPING them make choices that will make them happier!

So sending emails asking them to buy my books doesn't feel scammy or slimy or something that I worry I'm going to be bothering them about or that I dread having to do, because I am helping them. They are on my list for a reason! I didn't put them there!

And if they decide it is not helping them, they will take themselves off the list! Wins for everyone: I don't want to push readers who aren't my audience into reading my books, because then they won't be happy!

SO every email I send is structured to remove these barriers.

Here's the basic ways I address them:

1. **Ambivalence:** Here's why this new thing is super cool!
2. **Skepticism:** Here's how this new thing is like my other things that you have liked before!
3. **Concern:** Social proof: this is where ARC reviews / author blurbs come in.
4. **Procrastination:** For Book 1s, stand-alones, box sets, this is why I do launch discounts. It gives readers a reason to buy NOW, and they get a special bonus for following me—that being they know when the deals happen. So I get more social proof faster, which then helps me continue to make sales after the launch period is over.

There are lots of good arguments for NOT using this tactic though—like, the people who follow you are the most likely to give you money and launches are the time people are willing to pay the most.

So if anyone has had good success with things like preorder bonus campaigns, I'd love to hear what you did and how you set it up!

(IIRC elsewhere in his course Nick mentions you can use proof of preorder to send people goodies, and he did this by picking like, the first word of chapter 10, so people couldn't just get the freebie and return the book. The logistics management of that sounds too labor intensive though so I've never tried it.)



The structure of what order I address each barrier, for how long/how many times, etc. depends on what I'm doing—in a launch sequence, I spread them out, because I want to hit my list multiple times to increase the chances of one email hitting. If I have a one-day sale, they get the speed-run version lol.

e.g. "If you loved [xxx elements that are consistent across my brand] and have been waiting to try out my bestselling series that takes that but with [yyy different Cool Factor elements], this book is on sale for ONE DAY ONLY."

Do you see how I hit each of those barriers in one sentence?

Let's get a little more into the weeds on how we deal with the barriers when we have enough time that we're NOT speed-running newsletter marketing:

Procrastination is the obvious challenge that I think a lot of authors fail to address in their launch: how do you get readers to buy NOW?

But I think this is the one that in some ways is most straightforward to address: **You can create false scarcity.** Whether that is through a sale or a limited-time bonus or something else (like preorder campaigns where you don't tell readers the specific number you're aiming for...)

Most of us are already (too 🧠) familiar with needing to get ARC reviews, but not everyone uses them for social proof in their newsletter!

Pulling a few choice reader quotes with a "this is what readers are saying so far..." can go a long way.

And if you didn't get much ARC turnout, the great thing is it doesn't matter. I've gotten results from as few as two reviews sent to my newsletter.

(As an aside, Kindlepreneur did a test once for what works best on the review section of your book page, and found that readers responded best to recognizable authors with their book titles in bold. The actual context of the blurb mattered less than that it was said by "BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF ROMANTASY XXX." I don't know that newsletters work precisely the same way, but if you have friends in your genre—and you can make those friends in servers like this!—who will read your book and say nice things about it, that is likely worth highlighting.)

Last but not least, I combine the other two together because getting the balance right of the familiar vs. the original is like, the whole battle with writing to market lol, and encapsulating that is kind of the task of addressing ambivalence and skepticism imo.



But the great thing about newsletters is you get more word count. Like your newsletter shouldn't be a full essay, but you can take a few paragraphs to thread this needle.

Honestly, for me this is the fun one.

(yes yes am very nerd lol, if you didn't already know that it was probably evident by how much I've written here...)

We're fiction authors, we're good at getting words to do multiple things at the same time. We're storytellers, so we already have the skills to weave in the elements that our readers need to resonate with.

(If anyone would like an example of how I do this bridging, lmk, I'm happy to share examples! Your approach will vary depending on your brand and communication style.)

Now that I have written YOU a dang essay, let's get to specific discussion questions:

- Does the AIDA or barrier framework make more sense to you, and why?
- What's one barrier you're already doing a good job of addressing—even if it's on social media and not your newsletter—and can you think of a way to build on it?
- Which barrier do you think you struggle most to address in your marketing?
- Do you have any ideas on ways to address these barriers that isn't already mentioned?

And of course if you have any questions about this section of the post you want to talk about, ask away!

PART 2: THE CONTENT OF YOUR LAUNCH SEQUENCE EMAILS

Since everyone wants to talk about the theme/story part rather than the barriers lol, happy to pivot to talking about that first. 💜

So when I said at the beginning that I take what works for me from this piece and discard the rest, the crafting a story for your launch is the main thing I meant lol. Inventing a story for an email sequence seemed silly and forced to me, and I had difficulty wrapping my brain around what that should look like in practice in a way that wasn't just like, hokey, you know?

I do still want to tie my emails together! But the things I use are:



1. First and foremost, my brand.

By this I mean, first, the things that I know readers want from me*, the things they have responded to in past books.

But my brand is also how I present myself publicly: It's how I talk to my readers; the style of communication.

(Which should also be related to the style of the books! If you write comedic urban fantasy, you can and should joke in your newsletter. If you write deep-thinky philosophical prose, your newsletter voice should probably be different.)

*(If you don't know what your brand is, ask an author friend to go through your 5-star reviews and pull out what people are talking about and most. That'll get you pointed in the right direction. But how Elayna—for instance, choosing her because it is SO clear what her brand is 🙌—pitches a book to her readers, who want her to rip their hearts out, is going to be different from how I pitch a book to my readers, who want uplifting and thoughtful books. So that very much changes what and how we tell our readers about our books! For more on brand I believe we had a whole weekly discussion, so feel free to search the server!)

2. **The Cool Factors of the new book:** Spectacle! What is SHINY and FLASHY and NEW! You will not just be reading the same book again, readers, buy the new one!!

3. **The theme(s)** of the new book:** This is the heart. We can (and should and do!) dress it up with Cool Factors, with shadow daddies and elemental fire powers and whatever, but "it's the story of a woman finding her power and taking control of her life" or "it's about digging deep and finding your strength when you've hit rock bottom" or whatever it is that's going to hit your readers like a personal attack in their feels, that's what you want to isolate here.

**If you're not sure what the theme is, I recommend looking at your mc's character arc in very basic terms: where they start, where they end, and what they have to do to get to that end. (e.g. The FMC starts feeling trapped in her life as a protected heiress with no one who sees who she really is; she ends feeling empowered surrounded by found family. To get there she has to idk flee a life of pampered boredom to become someone she never could have dreamed of being before—let's say she joins the army as a foot soldier and goes through horrible shit, but she comes out the other side with comrades who know what she's capable of with a sword and what she'll choose when once again she's outnumbered and outgunned, and it's standing by the life she chose and people to have her back in return. That kind of thing.)



So in a pre-launch sequence, when I announce a new book, I start with the cover reveal and a description—NOT the book cover copy. But a pitch that incorporates 1) my brand, both in terms of what readers want from me and reminding them of what they've liked in past books, 2) the cool shiny, and 3) the Appeal to Feelings.

This is how we start to address the first two barriers: ambivalence and skepticism. We remind readers why they like our books, then tease Cool Shit, and hit them in the feelings for a chaser.

(Condensed: "My new book has all the banter and awkward romance and people trying to change the world that you've loved before, but this time that banter is between two masters of the sword on opposite sides of a war who would really like to introduce each other to their respective cats. At its heart, this is a story about two people who've never found anyone who didn't want to use them, who could see them for who they were beyond what they could do, truly discovering how much farther they can go when they have someone who sees and loves all of them, and who they trust, at their back giving them wings." Idk lol you get that idea)

Then in subsequent emails—where I introduce the actual back cover copy, and the launch sale or bonus, or the "look other people think it has all these things I'm telling you about too!" I highlight a different cool factor ("Here's the official description of my enemies to lovers romantasy with talking cats, he falls first, swords to the throat on BOTH sides, and two badasses who will overcome all the odds so they can finally be able to drink a cup of tea with a person who loves them, without worrying about getting stabbed in the back for the first time in their lives." (this fake story is getting out of hand lmao)

So every email I send isn't like a new entry in a constructed story: It's highlighting different aspects of the book—the familiar, and the new, ever that blend—because every different angle is a new opportunity to convert someone who wasn't convinced before.

But keeping it consistent at the same time, because you don't want people to be confused with how everything relates, right? That's why we start with the Big Pitch for the framework, and then highlight it from different angles.

So email 1: The big picture.

(Literally in fact lol: I do a cover reveal as the first email of my pre-launch for the "stop the scroll" factor to get them to pay attention, because this is the email where essentially I am putting my stake in the ground and declaring that they will want this book. Best foot forward! You don't have to do it this way, there are many ways to do a cover reveal or lead in to your announcement; I just like to do the cover first because then I can use the cover in all



my subsequent emails. My covers are PRETTY, and they have a job to do, dammit, and I want to maximize the chances for them to do it!)

Ahem: The big picture. This first announcement is when I make sure to hit notes of my brand, reminder of what people love from my work and that this new thing has that, but now it has new cool factors too!, and the Big Idea.

Email with reviews: "I love that readers are responding to x y and z pieces of this book."

Email with character art: "Look how she captured x y and z aspects"

Email with launch sale info: "So this is your opportunity to get a story with x y and z for the lowest possible price."

Email on launch day: "I'm so excited for my story with x y and z to be out in the world! Here's one last excerpt to celebrate..."

Email asking for reviews: "If you loved my story with x y and z, it would mean the world if you'd consider writing a review to help other people who need this in their lives find it."

And so on.

And each email reveals something new, so it's not punishing readers who open every email lol. And each email also harkens back to the Big Picture, so people who skimmed earlier but that you caught later aren't at sea.

X Y and Z do not have to be the same elements in each of those, to clarify! They're whatever pitch or angle or element you want to highlight that you think encapsulates an aspect that readers are going to love. And that includes what they've loved from you before, and what's new and cool about this next book.

("This is all the epic you've come to love from me, but with a whole new kind of relationship." "Battles? Check. Sexy times? Check. Add in talking cats? CHECK." "My newest romantasy using swordplay (AHEM 🧐👁️) to fall in love." See how each of those hits similar notes in a different way? Reminding readers of different aspects they've liked before that they're still going to get as well as what's fresh and exciting.)

You may have noticed I mentioned an excerpt above, and that's the other way I sometimes come up with content for launch newsletters: In my final proofreading pass, I keep a document open to copy out excerpts and snippets that I think will work for marketing. An excerpt that shows the mmc being sexy? Good to go with a newsletter talking about the romance in the book. An excerpt about trying food? Good for a newsletter highlighting my cool worldbuilding. And so on.



You can also organize the excerpts to progress your newsletter along. ("Last time you saw how our heroes met. Guess how things are looking the next time they cross swords?") I often try to do the hookiest one first, and the one that most encapsulates the Big Idea on launch day, and in between highlight other aspects of the book.

SO THE tl;dr: Rather than an artificially constructed story for a newsletter launch sequence, I use the existing story: Just revealing new layers of it in each email. Kind of like how we unfold a story in a novel! But each email is hammering away at the barriers.

I haven't talked about the overall launch sequence structure yet which I think will help put this more into "oh how that's how that works" from "holy crap that's a lot Casey," but this is already a second essay so I'm stopping here for now lol.

So if your response is like, "you're a monster," that is super valid lol but it's because I skipped the framework to talk about the part people were asking questions about, I promise implementation isn't complicated; I just want to make sure we're covering the whys and hows.

And remember again: take what works for you, discard the rest.

So let me know what other questions you have, and we'll get to that next haha.

Here are some to think about:

- What consistent parts of your books do your readers like?
- Are your emails hitting your brand (reminding your readers why they like you), the New Cool Factor, and the Big Idea (what does it all meeeeee, man)? If not, which do you need to work on?
- We don't want to put everything in one email, because hitting your list multiple times gives you more chances to convert them. So what are some reveals you are already doing in your marketing for your books that you could break into different emails?
- Is there a tactic I talked about above that you haven't tried yet in your newsletter that you think you could incorporate?

PART 3: STRUCTURING A LAUNCH SEQUENCE

Hi all! I am back at last to talk about structuring a launch sequence. Please brace for another wall of text 🤪



As Nick talks about in his post, there are three parts of this: pre-launch, launch, and post-launch.

In my opinion, the pre-launch emails are what are most important. You're priming the pump, as it were, to make as big of a splash as possible on launch day.

You need to do at least 2 pre-launch emails imo, but I usually do 3-4. Then I do two during launch week and one during post-launch.

Nick advises three emails during launch week, but honestly that felt really excessive to me? Very like. cat shoving its head under my hand to be like hey did you know there was a cat here who is hungry. Hey. Hey. HEY. We don't want to annoy readers lol.

For post-launch, I also figure by then I've sent them like six emails about the same book in a short timeframe, so I try to give it a rest. But if anyone has a different opinion or thoughts on how to use post-launch, I'm all ears!

You CAN do as many pre-launch emails as you want, for as long as you want. I PERSONALLY don't usually start marketing until a month or two before launch, but you can definitely space out if you like doing long preorders and building buzz on social media etc.

But you should do at least a couple close to launch, to remind people that it's coming and get them chomping at the bit.

The bare minimum 2 pre-launch emails are:

1. ANNOUNCEMENT: Cover reveal combined with The Big Idea
2. 1-2 WEEKS BEFORE LAUNCH: Book description, social proof, the "buy it now" incentive

See how that's a lot of things in that second email? The first email is for ~vibes~, but the second email now has to do a whole lot of lifting. Which is why I usually divide this up, because every email is a new chance to capture readers.

Here's a sample timeline:

PRE-LAUNCH

- 1 month before launch: Cover reveal, announcement (Ambivalence, Skepticism)
- 2 weeks before launch: Book description, a different pitch (Ambivalence, Skepticism; if including an excerpt, also Concern)



- 1 week before launch: Preorder incentive, ARC reviews (Procrastination, Concern, Ambivalence/Skepticism)

LAUNCH WEEK

- Launch day: The books is live, yay! (Ambivalence)
- Before the end of launch week: Last chance to get the preorder incentive! (Procrastination)

POST-LAUNCH

- 1-2 weeks after launch: Please join with other people who've reviewed! (Concern)

If I have more things to share, I will add them into the pre-launch sequence. For instance, character art reveal gets its own email. If I have multiple versions of the book, say I also have a cool hardcover with its own dust jacket, I'll want to spotlight that. Maybe I'd move ARC reviews to the blurb email and combine the different editions with the ebook launch discount, so it's like, everyone can get the version that works for them!

I personally also include excerpts (around 3-500 words) in most of these emails too. It depends how many good excerpts I pulled tbh; if I'm sending seven emails and I only have six excerpts, I don't start sharing them til the second email. Or I don't have one in post-launch. Tailor as needed.

Let me break this down a little more so you can see how this works in practice.

Remember that the launch sequence is designed to eliminate the barriers to why people don't buy:

1. Ambivalence – “Why should I be interested in this?”
2. Skepticism – “Why should I buy from YOU?”
3. Concern – “Sounds good, but it’s not right for ME.”
4. Procrastination – “Sounds great! I’ll take a look later.” (Eg – they never will).

What we were mainly talking about last week is especially how you do the first email, which Lisette has just executed and shared an excellent example of above!

To recap, the first email should remind readers about your BRAND—the parts of your books that are consistent and that they love—and then also entice them with what's NEW AND COOL about the new book, and also hint at the THEME—the heart of what makes it special. Sample:



I'm so excited to finally announce my new book! It's the first in a fantasy romance series, and Book 1 is called **SWORD AGAINST YOUR THROAT: An enemies-to-lovers talking cat adventure** ([HYPERLINK THAT SHIT](#)). Check out this **STUNNING** cover by [artist name here]!

SWORD AGAINST YOUR THROAT has been so much fun to write. Does it have the enemies-to-lovers vibes you love from my **WHO LET THE CAT SHIFTERS OUT** epic fantasy series? Absolutely. Does it have laugh-out-loud banter when the stakes are at an all-time high? You bet. Does it have gut-wrenching romance that will take you apart and put you back together again? You know it.

But it also asks the question, what if **THESE** enemies had matchmaking talking cats heckling them while they're trying to survive the deadliest—and sexiest—opponent they've ever faced?

You all loved the actual cats in **CAT SHIFTERS** so much that this time, I wanted to bring them to the fore. And as I explored what that would mean for two duelists caught in the middle of a war, this book spilled out into amazing new directions.

It's about who we are when we're at our worst and our best, and the people who love all sides of us. It's about what it takes to leave behind who you thought you were when it's holding you back and become all that you can be. And it's about making connections in the unlikeliest of places, how the people we are told to hate we can come to love, and the power of daring to break the mold.

I hope you love it.

[BIG OL' PREORDER BUTTON]

Barriers addressed: Ambivalence ("Here's why this new thing is super cool!") and Skepticism: (Here's how this new thing is like my other thing that you like!)

You can see how I started with "REMEMBER ALL THE THINGS YOU LIKE ABOUT MY WORK THIS HAS THEM TOO" then moved to "and also it has shiny **NEW** things that I also have reason to believe you will like!" and then finally to what makes the book actually special (hit them in the feelings!!).

Another pre-launch email:

I'm back today with more news! Reviews are starting to come in for **SWORD AGAINST YOUR THROAT** ([HYPERLINK THAT SHIT](#)), and they're all so good!!



I love my rival master duelists with sage cat mentors fantasy romance and how it grew from a weird little idea to something so epic.

Here's some of what people are saying:



Casey has done it again! The banter is top-notch, and she dials the enemies-to-lovers up to eleven. If you loved WHO LET THE CAT SHIFTERS OUT, you'll love SWORD AGAINST YOUR THROAT! -Goodreads Review



Forced proximity, only one bed, AND talking cats? Sign me up! This book was a perfect epic fantasy romance read, and I can't wait for the next one. -NetGalley Review



I love the hyper-competent characters and how they really cared about each other, even when holding swords to their throats. The tension between them was absolutely off the charts. Highly recommend! -Goodreads Review

I love how readers are loving the same parts that I love: the tension between two people who respect each other, the silliness, and how epically it escalates.

(Since I know how many of you are anime lovers, it's giving Sakura and Luna / Shaoran and Artemis from Cardcaptor Sakura. 😊)

Here's a little more about the book:

[official book description]

[BIG OL' PREORDER BUTTON]

[SOME IMAGE WITH THE COVER AND HYPERLINK THAT SHIT]

Ready for the first official taste? Read on for an excerpt!

[Some excerpt of banter with sage cat mentors or something idk, something you were highlighting in the email]

[ANOTHER BIG OL' PREORDER BUTTON]

Barriers addressed: Ambivalence, Skepticism, and Concern (Social proof!)



So let's talk more about this one, because this email did a few things! First, it had new information for readers: The blurb, but more importantly the social proof.

The social proof was chosen to specifically highlight a few things: the enthusiasm obviously (actual humans are excited about this), the genre (it is the genre it says it is! Readers who like this genre will like this book!), that it's in-line with reader expectations for this AUTHOR (if you liked her other books, you'll like this one too!), and specific tropes (ideally a mix of both brand-consistent and new ones).

Then in the "flavor" text, you're doing a couple things: you're a) highlighting the things that the reviews are calling out to make sure people notice them, and b) pitching the book in a new way that may call to readers differently. (I actually pitched it two different ways here lol this isn't even a real book why I am like this 🤪)

If you do social media posts, it's the same skill of adjusting your pitches. If you're not sure how to do a different pitch: one pitch can be like, the two-sentence log line. Another pitch can be a list of all the tropes. We all write faro here, make sure SOMEWHERE you're highlighting tropes lol.

The social proof is doing work not just on addressing the "but it's not right for ME" by showing multiple examples of people who not only love it, but react to DIFFERENT parts of it to, again, target people who react to different things.

(note: they should all still be complementary—like don't include one review that's like "this is non-stop action from start to finish" and another that says "what a lyrical musing on the philosophy of war" because then your readers will just be confused about what the book actually is. Different SIDES, not actually contrasting each other lol.)

But it's also furthering both the Ambivalence and Skepticism, talking about what's cool about this book, and that it's more of what you like in other books by the same author.

Another pre-launch email:

Friends this art by Y artist for SWORD AGAINST MY THROAT (HYPERLINK! THAT! SHIT!) just landed in my inbox and OMG I was NOT prepared!!

[HYPERLINKED ART]

Y artist did SUCH a good job of capturing the main characters' whole THING and the vibe for the whole story. The smirk on her face at meeting her match! The blatant longing in his eyes for her! BOTH of them with swords against each other's throats!!



(Also did you notice the tiny miffed cats in the corners? I am SCREAMING it's so good lmaooo)

AHEM. fans face

I also wanted to let you know that this book is going to be launching at a discount of only 99 cents! **[BOLD AND HYPERLINK]** If you've already preordered the ebook, you're my favorite, and don't worry, you'll still get the discount price automatically!

And if you haven't preordered yet, this is the cheapest possible you'll be able to get the book. The launch discount is only going through the **FIRST WEEK** and it won't be on sale again for a long time, so don't miss this chance!

[PREORDER]

Here's one more excerpt before next week's launch, featuring—you guessed it—her sword at his throat.

[EXCERPT]

[BUTTON]

Barriers addressed: Procrastination (Why you should buy NOW) and Ambivalence

You don't always have character art, this is just an example! Inevitably I have SOMETHING for a third email—different physical editions, an author review, art. Just make sure that the launch discount is in the subject line so people don't miss it!

But if I have art, see how I'm baking it in to, again, highlight aspects of the book I want people to notice? You can talk about the beautiful setting, or their gorgeous clothes, or how ripped he is, or whatever. Tie it in. Don't just be like LOOK HERE'S A PRETTY PICTURE GOODBYEEEEEEEEEE help make it work for you!!

And the excerpt should connect somehow to whatever you're highlighting—if it's a map in the book, the excerpt can be about traveling. If it's a gorgeous alternate cover, some excerpt about beauty. You know?

I think I mentioned before that I pick out my excerpts when I'm doing my final proof pass, so it's before I've written the newsletters, not the other way around—pick the stuff you want to highlight first, then figure out how to connect it.

(I literally once did a newsletter themed on dumplings. I had a dumpling excerpt, I had an audiobook launching for another series at the same time as I was in pre-launch—thank you Podium—that also had dumplings in it, I tied them together to talk about immersing



readers in the worlds and particularly my cool new worldbuilding concept. I once had a social media meme that was a perfect encapsulation of the fmc being extra, I worked it in. You find stuff!)

So there you have it: three sample emails for a pre-launch, addressing all the barriers.

After that, the final emails are simple:

Launch day: short and to the point. Get a new pitch in there. (Ambivalence)

- (oh, one more thing here—launch day my pitch is usually focusing on theme in the interest of punching my readers in the feelings to make them buy lol. For the end of week incentive reminder, I tend to do a trope-heavy pitch—like just look at all the shiny things you get cheap for a limited time! 😊)

End of launch week: hammer home that preorder bonus with a LAST CHANCE email. (Procrastination)

Post-launch: Ask for reviews. I use this also as an opportunity to be like, thank you SO much to everyone who's already read and written reviews, I'm so happy people are loving my blah blah blah. (Concern)

You can also work Skepticism in there somewhere—like 'thanks so much to everyone who sticks with me through all my enemies-to-lovers bantery goodness', you know?

If you're ever not sure what to actually say in addition to just like, copying and pasting your book description in, go look at the barriers list again, pick one, and attack it.

The first time you lay out one of these will take a couple hours, but that's for writing copy for ALL THE EMAILS. Then you just copy and paste! Every subsequent launch I've done has been faster, because I can copy the template—like, what do I do after the cover reveal? OH right, that's the next thing.

I draft in a document with headers that remind me what that email is for as well as when it should go out (e.g. two weeks before, etc.), then I'll literally copy and paste text and write over it lol. You can do most of the lifting the first time, and then in the future it's just replacing with new pitches.

(Which takes time! But a lot less time than figuring out what an email should even be doing, let alone multiple of them.)



I make a list of any reveals I'm going to have and distribute them among the template, and if it looks like I have too many things in an email—reader fatigue is real, they won't scroll forever even if it's good shit—I add another email to the pre-launch.

Honestly my sample email 2 there is probably too many things—that email could have been subject: First Look at SWORD AGAINST YOUR THROAT! And then just done the blurb and the first excerpt and saved the social proof for another email.

Anyway! That's the structure talk.

So now we know:

- What barriers we need to address in our launch sequence to get people to buy the book
- How to actually address those barriers
- What goes in each email

If you have questions for me on structure, or how it all fits together, let me know!

Some things to think about:

● What assets do you usually have before a launch? (At minimum: a cover and a book description) What are some others that you ALREADY have that you could incorporate into your pre-launch sequence? And what are some new ones you might add in? (Excerpts, trope lists or graphics, character art, reviews...)

● In your last launch, how many emails did you have before launch day? If you didn't have many, how could you have divided them up more or added more to them?

● Which launch sequence email do you think will be hardest for you to write and why? (The initial announcement, the reveal of a preorder incentive, pitching the book in a different way, asking for reviews, etc.) Is there something we've talked about that you think you could try to make it easier? (And if not, throw it at us, let's see if we can help!)

● What parts of this approach to launches resonates with you, and what parts do you object to / dislike? (We're all different! Take what works for you and discard the rest, I PROMISE I will not be offended to be disagreed with lol, I literally started this by saying I disagreed with a lot of the original text we read. If the thought of doing something in here fills you with dread and you'll never be able to make yourself write the email, don't do it. And think about that now so that you don't try to force yourself into something later. Some things that are hard for us there are ways to make easier; others it's best to focus on different strengths. You do you. 💜)